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INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF AMERICAN REPUBLICS

JOHN BARRETT, DIRECTOR

FRANCISCO J. YÁNES, SECRETARY

CUBA

GENERAL DESCRIPTIVE DATA

PREPARED IN JUNE

1909



WASHINGTON

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CUBA

Cuba, the largest of the Antilles, is geographically situated between $19^{\circ} 40'$ and $23^{\circ} 33'$ latitude north and 74° and 85° longitude west, in length over 730 miles, with an average width of 50 miles. It has an area of 45,883 square miles, exceeding the area of the State of Pennsylvania by more than 600 square miles, and a population of 2,048,980, equal to about 44 per square mile, almost double the population per square mile of the United States of America (23.2), being one of the most densely populated of the American Republics.

A number of irregular mountain chains cross the territory of Cuba in various directions, forming between them a number of extremely fertile and healthful plateaus and valleys, in which nearly all the products of the Tropics are successfully raised. The Republic is especially noted for the excellence of its tobacco and sugar, which constitute the most important articles of export.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The island of Cuba was discovered by COLUMBUS on his first voyage of exploration, on October 28, 1492. He landed at what is now called the Bay of Nuevitas and took possession of the country in the name of the King of Spain. The country was called successively Juana, Santiago, and Ave Maria, finally regaining its original Indian name of Cuba. DIEGO VELASQUEZ was appointed governor of the island in the year 1511, and to him fell the task of subduing the aborigines, the warlike and savage Caribs and Nahacs. Cuba was important to the Spaniards as a strategical point. From the island numerous expeditions started for the mainland, among the most important being that of CORTEZ, which resulted in the conquest of Mexico. Later on, the vast mineral wealth of Mexico and Peru having been made known, Havana became the rendezvous for the treasure ships. From Havana they sailed under protection of the war vessels for Spain.

It was due to the importance of Havana that the French, Dutch, and British buccaneers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries attempted on several occasions to capture the port; while unsuccessful, they succeeded in more than one attempt in carrying off valuable booty.

When Spain was at war with Great Britain and France, in the year 1762, a strong British army was sent out to conquer Cuba. After a siege of two months, Havana surrendered to Lord ALBEMARLE on August 12, 1762. The British retained possession of the island until the year following, when by the treaty concluded between the three powers Cuba was once more restored to the Spanish authorities on June 6, 1763.

Although the movement for independence was initiated in Cuba early in the nineteenth century, she was to suffer more and obtain her independence later than any of the other American Republics, the Spanish Government being determined to retain control of the Pearl of the Antilles. In none of the Spanish-American countries, perhaps, was the war for independence more fiercely contested than in Cuba, in spite of which such indefatigable patriots as JOSÉ MARTÍ, BARTOLOMÉ MASÓ, MAXIMO GOMEZ, and others continued the struggle, until at last the people of the United States of America were roused



SR. GENERAL JOSÉ MIGUEL GÓMEZ,
PRESIDENT OF CUBA.

by the atrocities committed by the Spanish General WEYLER, and the intervention of the latter country resulted in the war with Spain in the year 1898. When, by the treaty of Paris, December 10, 1898, the war was ended, Cuba became free and independent, and TOMAS ESTRADA PALMA was inaugurated President of the Republic of Cuba on May 20, 1902. Thus the struggle for independence, which lasted eighty years, but which may be said to have taken definite form with the famous proclamation of the patriots on October 10, 1868, known as the "Declaration of Yara," was brought to a successful end.

President ESTRADA PALMA resigned his office on September 28, 1906, and the United States of America temporarily intervened until new elections could be held. Gen. JOSÉ MIGUEL GOMEZ was elected President and ALFREDO ZAYAS Vice-President in December, 1908, and were formally inaugurated on January 28, 1909, when the Provisional Governor, CHARLES E. MAGOON, withdrew.

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT.

The constitution of the Republic of Cuba, proclaimed on February 21, 1901, provides for a republican, representative form of government, with the usual division into legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

The Senate and the House of Representatives, forming together the National Congress, are intrusted with the legislative power. The former consists of 24 and the latter of 64 members. Senators are elected

indirectly for a term of eight years, at the rate of four Senators for each province, and the whole Senate is renewed by halves every four years. Representatives are elected by popular vote, every citizen over 21 years of age having the right of suffrage. They are elected for a term of four years, at the rate of 1 for every 25,000 inhabitants, and the House of Representatives is renewed by halves every two years.

The President of the Republic, assisted by a Cabinet of 8 Ministers or Secretaries of State, exercises the executive power. Cabinet Ministers are appointed by the President, but are responsible to Congress for their acts. The President and Vice-President are elected indirectly, in the same manner as are the Senators, by an electoral college chosen by the people for that purpose. They are elected for a term of four years, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

The judicial power of the country is vested in a National Supreme Court, 6 Superior Courts, 1 for each province, 36 courts of the First Instance, and a number of minor courts. The justices of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President of the Republic, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

INTERIOR GOVERNMENT.

Cuba is politically divided into six provinces, which are again divided into municipal districts. The administration of the province is in the hands of a Governor, assisted by a provincial council, both elected by popular vote for a term of four years, while the municipal districts are administered by a Mayor and a municipal council, likewise elected by popular vote.

The provinces of Cuba and their respective capitals are:

| Province of— | Capital. |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Pinar del Rio..... | Pinar del Rio. |
| Havana..... | Havana. ^a |
| Matanzas..... | Matanzas. |
| Santa Clara..... | Santa Clara. |
| Camaguey..... | Camaguey. |
| Oriente..... | Santiago de Cuba. |
| President..... | Gen. JOSÉ MIGUEL GOMEZ. |
| Vice-President..... | Sr. DON ALFREDO ZAYAS. |
| Secretary of State..... | Sr. DON JUSTO GARCÍA VÉLEZ. |
| Secretary of Justice..... | Sr. DR. LUIS OCTAVIO DIVIÑÓ. |
| Secretary of Government..... | Sr. DR. NICOLÁS ALBERDÍ. |
| Secretary of Promotion..... | Sr. DON MARCELINO DÍAZ DE VILLEGAS. |
| Secretary of Health and Charities..... | Sr. DR. MATÍAS DUQUE. |
| Secretary of Public Instruction and Fine Arts..... | Sr. DR. RAMÓN MEZA. |
| Secretary of Public Works..... | Sr. DON BENITO LAGUERUELA. |
| Secretary of Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor..... | Sr. DON ORTELIO FOYO. |

The salary of the President is \$15,000.

^aAlso capital of the Republic.

CUBA IN 1908.

Progress and good will characterize the published utterances of the new Cuban Executive. President GOMEZ, on taking office, surrounded himself with able advisers and expressed his desire to carry forward the work of national advancement along lines of policy of proven value. His references to the administration of Hon. CHARLES E. MAGOON have been marked by an appreciation of the onerous nature of the task undertaken, and in a statement of the policy of the administration it is announced that the President will seek beneficial reforms and improvements, such as the establishment of agricultural banks, radical labor legislation, and the maintenance of proper highways. While the year 1908 showed a falling off in trade and customs receipts, as compared with the previous twelve months, the reported large crops of sugar and tobacco for the present season will offset the temporary loss.

The presidential election held on November 14, 1908, was in accordance with the provisions of the decree of April 1, 1908, and under the supervision of the central and provincial election boards.

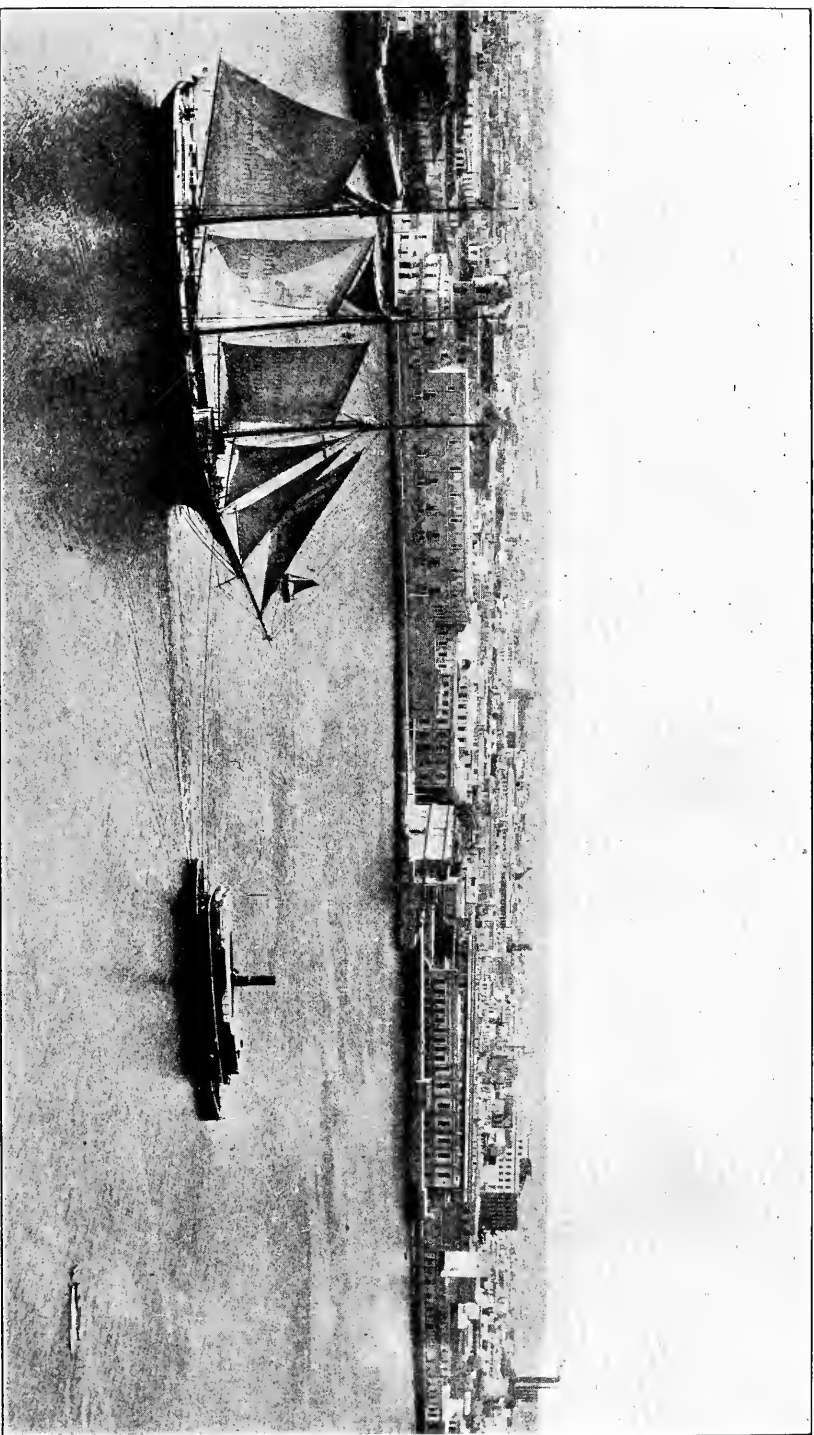
FINANCE.

The Cuban budget for 1908-9 estimated expenditures at \$34,220,644.15. In this are included ordinary expenditures, \$24,285,303, and additions thereto, \$207,495; fixed charges, \$2,088,162, and additions thereto, \$501,660, to which sum of \$27,082,620 must be added \$7,137,424.15, the amount of extraordinary expenditures by virtue of decrees of the Provisional Government.

For 1909-10, expenditures are estimated at \$33,800,000. As in the preceding year, expenditures are divided into ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary expenditures are \$26,427,855.94, and extraordinary \$6,872,144.06, with \$500,000 additional for agriculture.

The financial condition of the island is considered fairly satisfactory; the balance on hand March 27, 1909, amounted to \$2,515,363, with outstanding obligations amounting to \$12,856,000, including credits authorized under preceding administrations. It is anticipated that the customs receipts will provide sufficient revenue to cover these obligations without recourse to the bond issue authorized by the Provisional Government.

In view of the fact that the revenue derived from imports will be sufficient to meet the service of the foreign debt, it is proposed to suspend the export duties on sugar, tobacco, and liquors and to enter into a new commercial treaty with the United States providing for a reduction of import duties on certain necessities of life and agricultural machinery. The total customs receipts at the ports of the



(Miller Photo)

VIEW OF HAVANA AND THE WATER FRONT FROM CABANA FORTRESS.

island during the year aggregated \$22,231,707.46 showing a decline of \$4,079,889.40 as compared with 1907.

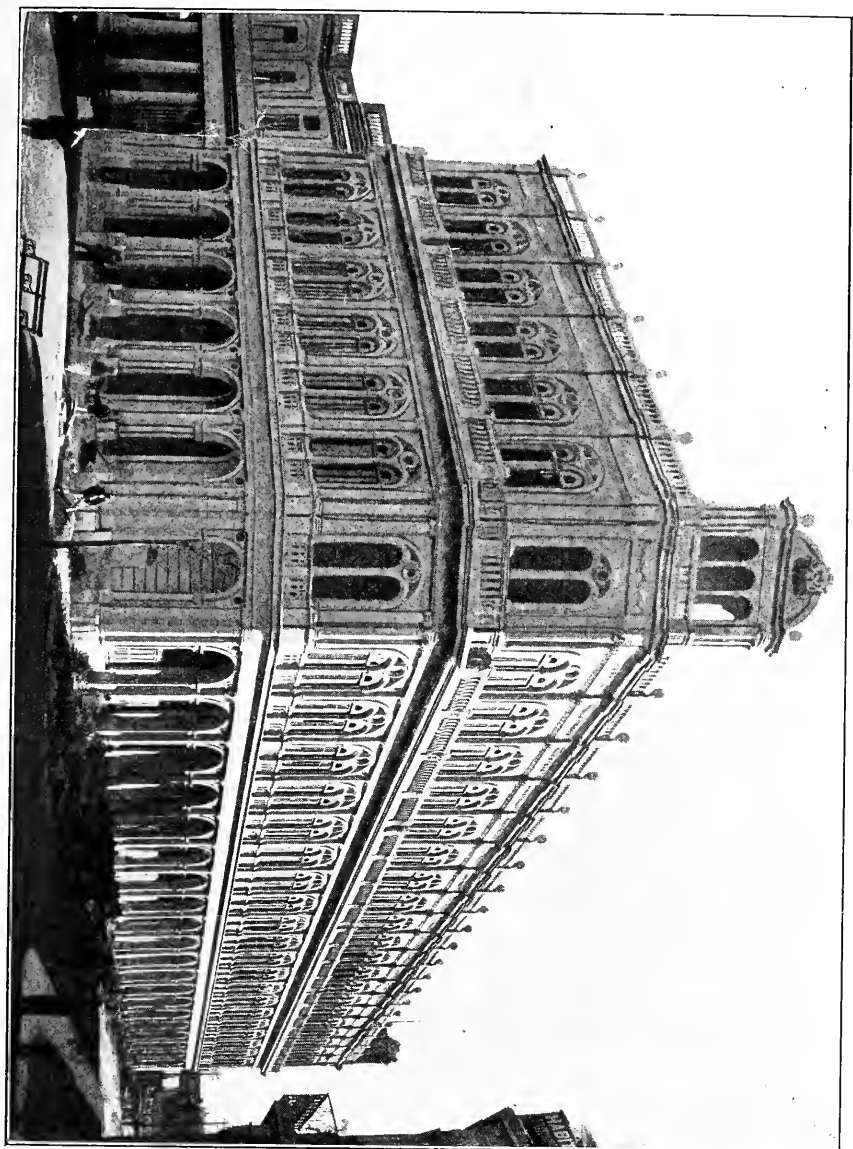
American capital in the island represents a total investment of \$141,000,000, distributed as follows: Railways, \$34,000,000; sugar and tobacco, \$68,000,000; real estate, \$18,000,000; banks, \$5,000,000; agricultural industries (other than those specifically mentioned), \$4,000,000; mortgages, \$3,500,000; navigation companies, \$1,500,000; and miscellaneous investments, \$7,000,000. The English capital invested in the island amounts to nearly \$90,000,000, about \$5,000,000 of which is in steamships, \$5,000,000 in real estate, and the balance mostly in railway interests, aggregating nearly \$80,000,000.

COMMERCE.

Figures of the foreign trade for the calendar year 1908 showed total imports amounting to \$85,218,391, and exports to \$94,603,324, exclusive of specie. The countries participating in this trade in the order of their importance were: United States, imports \$41,576,980, exports, \$78,868,490; Great Britain, imports \$11,724,029, exports \$4,775,966; Germany, imports \$7,172,358, exports \$4,711,164; Spain imports \$7,454,933, exports \$958,207; other American countries, imports \$7,256,708, exports \$2,257,077; other European countries, imports \$3,548,662, exports \$978,084; and other countries, imports \$1,455,229, and exports \$652,339. The specie imports during the year amounted to \$1,150,376 and exports to \$4,245,767.

Tobacco and sugar comprised the bulk of Cuban exports, for which the United States is the principal market. The tobacco crop for 1908 was valued at \$42,321,306.92, and showed a slight decline as compared with 1907, the number of bales being 563,059. The value of tobacco exported is given as \$31,056,921.53, as compared with \$28,645,908.60 in 1907, the remaining \$11,264,385 representing home consumption. Of the exports, leaf tobacco amounted to \$18,354,420.21; cigars, \$12,275,040.96; cigarettes, \$295,883.98 and picadura or leaf cut, \$131,576.38.

The year 1908 showed a gain of $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent in exports of cigars from the port of Havana as compared with 1907. The United States, which had held first place in consumption of the article fell to second place, Great Britain going to first. The principal countries which received cigars from Cuba showed the following difference for the two years: Great Britain, (1908) 70,677,528, (1907) 56,699,274; United States, (1908) 47,550,742, (1907) 61,869,131; Germany, (1908) 24,183,131, (1907) 23,205,411; France, (1908) 11,418,782, (1907) 10,638,875; Canada, (1908) 7,084,020, (1907) 10,271,013, and Australia, (1908) 6,906,042, (1907) 4,261,173. The exports of leaf tobacco to the United States increased heavily, the total number of bales exported in 1908 being 65 per cent greater than in 1907. The six prin-



BUILDING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MERCANTILE CLERKS OF HAVANA, CUBA.

cipal countries receiving Havana pure leaf compared as follows: United States, 236,849 bales in 1908, as compared with 180,274 in 1907; Germany, 51,590, as compared with 6,945; Spain, 18,720, as compared with 2,950; Austria, 6,901, as compared with 2,930; Argentine Republic, 6,555, as compared with 1,671, and Canada, 3,563, as compared with 3,361.

The total output of sugar in the Republic for 1908 was placed at nearly 1,000,000 tons, and up to March 1, 1909, statistics of exportation and stock of sugar in the producing season of 1909 showed a total of 593,848 tons, indicating a crop slightly in excess of 1,400,000 tons.

An advancing trade in the fruits of the country for the year is reported, shipments of pineapples and oranges to the New York market being particularly noteworthy. The larger part of the cedar and mahogany exported from the island also goes to the same market.



A READER IN A CIGAR FACTORY IN CUBA.

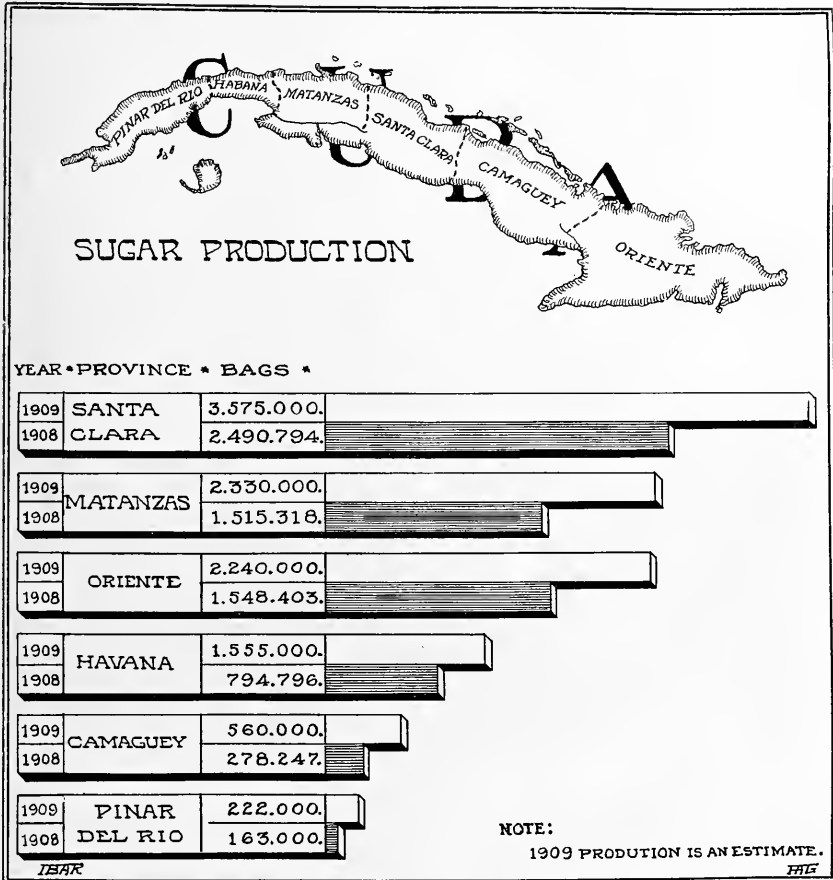
Speaking generally of the agricultural exports of the island, they show the following average annual values: Raw and refined sugar, \$38,000,000; leaf tobacco, \$12,000,000; fruits, \$2,000,000; grains and vegetables, \$600,000. Of the exports the United States takes 84.9 per cent; England, 6.2; Germany, 3.7; France, 1.2; other American countries, 1.8; Spain, 1, and other European and other countries a smaller ratio.

PRODUCTION AND INDUSTRIES.

The two great staples of Cuba's agricultural production, sugar and tobacco, showed satisfactory returns for 1908, with a favorable outlook for the ensuing season.

The tobacco-producing provinces and their output in bales for the year were as follows: Vuelta Abajo, 261,095; Semivuelta, 25,024; Partidos, 64,360; Matanzas, 445; Remedios, 194,929; Puerto Principe, 5,228; Santiago de Cuba, 12,878, a total of 563,959 bales, as compared with 440,745 in 1907.

The sugar crop for 1908 was placed at 6,790,851 bags and the 1909 crop at 10,082,500 bags. Cane growing covers $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the total area of the 6 provinces of Pinar del Rio, Havana, Matanzas, Santa



Clara, Camaguey, and Oriente, while of the 186 plantations in operation 72 are owned by Cubans, 38 by citizens of the United States, and 76 by English, French, and Spanish proprietors. Santa Clara has 70 working plantations; Matanzas, 56; Oriente, 27; Havana, 27; Pinar del Rio, 7, and Camaguey, 5. The mills of the island produce annually from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 tons of sugar, 4,139,052 gallons of molasses of the first class and 39,765,326 of the second, 321,140 gallons of alcohol, and 1,763,810 gallons of aguardiente. Sugar refining

is confined practically to Cardenas, where there are three refineries. There are other small plants for local consumption though of no importance commercially.

The orange crop for 1908 was the largest in the history of the country, reaching an output of nearly half a million crates, while shipments of pineapples aggregated approximately 1,000,000 crates, nearly all of which went to New York. The value of pineapples shipped in 1908 was placed at \$904,117, and of this amount the United States received \$903,540, as compared with 1907 shipments which aggregated \$660,873, of which \$658,870 went to the United States.

The cultivation of cacao in the island during the fiscal year 1907-8 was carried forward on 1,137 plantations with 1,960,246 trees, as com-



THE NEW PRODUCE EXCHANGE BUILDING IN THE CITY OF HAVANA—IT COST \$600,000 GOLD AND WAS OPENED IN MARCH, 1909.

pared with 745 plantations and 1,860,300 trees in 1906-7. The production declined, however, from 9,380,900 pounds to 6,023,700 pounds by reason of lack of rain, although when this crop is compared with that of 1902, which amounted to 3,122,600 pounds, the growing importance of this industry is apparent. Exports during the last six months of 1907 represented a value of \$477,000, over half of which was shipped to the United States, France, Spain, and Germany taking 983,759, 277,346, and 241,206 pounds, respectively. The quantity sent to Great Britain shows a steady decrease. Experimental sowings have been made with seeds from Guayaquil, Trinidad, and San Carlos de Costa Rica, the latter giving the best results.

The consumption of sisal hemp in Cuba is about 5,000,000 pounds per annum and of Manila hemp about 2,500,000 pounds, all of which is imported. In addition about 500,000 pounds of ixtle, jute, and other similar fibers are supplied by other countries.

Special legislation was enacted during the year providing for the importation of cattle for breeding purposes, and by a decree of January 21, 1908, article 7 of the law of September 15, 1902, prohibiting the exportation of cattle from Cuba was repealed. The number of cattle in the island increased from 999,862 head in 1902 to 2,579,492 in 1906; and the number of horses in the same period increased 139.65 per cent; mules, 65.85 per cent; and asses, 43.36 per cent.

Mineral exploitation for 1908 is represented by iron shipments of 570,310 tons, valued at \$1,726,698; manganese, 1,470 tons, valued at \$13,489; copper, 45,381 tons, valued at \$469,540; and smaller shipments of gold, petroleum, and asphalt.

The acquisition by the Bethlehem Steel Company of the United States of an important iron-ore deposit located near Santiago, Cuba, has been reported as a feature in the development of the mineral resources of the Republic. The ore beds have been measured up by engineers as embracing 75,000,000 tons, a peculiarity of the deposit consisting in the fact that it contains 2 per cent nickel and 1 per cent chromium. The tract covers an area of 875 acres and lies about 12 miles east of Santiago. It is regarded by experts as the most important discovery of iron-ore deposits made within twenty years.

Valuable deposits of salt have been reported in the province of Matanzas which it is expected will figure in the future economic development of the island. At present the annual importations of this article aggregate about 280,000 sacks. The salt taken from the Matanzas mine is pure product, and it is hoped ultimately to increase the output sufficiently to meet the needs of the home market.

COMMUNICATIONS.

The extent of railways in the Republic is 2,329 miles and of highways 631 miles with 140 bridges, 57 of which are steel and 12 concrete. A subsidy of \$1,500,000 has been granted for the purpose of extending the Cuba railway for a distance of 155 miles. The annual report of this corporation for the year ended June 30, 1908, showed gross earnings of \$2,039,467.95 and operating expenses of \$1,318,180.36, the net earnings figuring for \$721,287.59. The cash surplus at the close of the year was reported as \$1,093,286.66.

The expenditures of the Provisional Government in the construction of macadamized roads was stated by President GOMEZ, in a recently delivered message, to have been \$9,448,170.52. The estimated cost of completing the 300 miles of road now under construction is placed at \$1,500,000.

STEAMSHIPS AND WATERWAYS.

The island of Cuba is within easy reach of the United States, and numerous steamship lines ply regularly between the various ports of the two countries, as well as between Havana and European ports.

The principal port is Havana, but a number of other ports and bays afford excellent anchorage and shelter for ocean-going vessels, among which Matanzas, Cienfuegos, Santiago de Cuba, and Guantánamo are the most important.



THE TOURING CAR IN CUBA.

Three steamship lines have regular sailings from New York for Havana and other Cuban ports, viz: New York and Cuban Mail Steamship Company, Ward Line, twice every week; the Munson Steamship Company, fortnightly, and the *Compañía Transatlántica*, once every month, making the run in from four to five days, first-class passage being from \$30 to \$60. The Munson Steamship Company has steamers leaving Mobile, Alabama, fortnightly, while the Southern Pacific Company maintains a regular service between New

Orleans and Havana, sailing every five days, and making the run in one day. The Peninsular and Occidental Steamship Company's steamers leave Port Tampa and Key West three times a week for Havana and the Commercial Union Navigation Company's steamers sail every alternate Friday from Galveston.

The Boston-Cuba Steamship Company is scheduled to inaugurate a service in August, 1909; and a possible shipping route discussed is that from Havana to Savannah, Georgia, a line which would afford quick communication with the manufacturing South and a speedy transit of passengers and freight to and from populous districts south and north of the Ohio River. The cargo for Cuba originating in Georgia and the eastern South is already of very large volume and is increasing steadily.

Although there are a number of rivers in Cuba, some of them with a considerable volume of water, they are usually too short and swift to be of any service to navigation. The largest of these, the River Cauto, is navigable for a distance of about 50 miles for light-draft vessels only, while the Sagua la Grande is navigable for about 20 miles, and several of the other streams are navigable only for a few miles inland.

The convention pertaining to the exchange of postal money orders between the Republic of Cuba and the United States became effective on July 3, 1908, and a series of regulations in regard to consular fees were put in effect on January 1, 1909.

POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

There are 418 post-offices and 147 telegraph offices, with 5,065 miles of line in operation.

The following wireless stations have been completed and accepted by the Cuban Government: Pinar del Rio, Santa Clara, Morro Castle, Havana, and Nueva Gerona, Isle of Pines. Stations at Camaguey, Baraço, Santiago de Cuba, Bayamo, Havana, Guantanamo, and Cape San Antonio are also completed and open for government and public service.

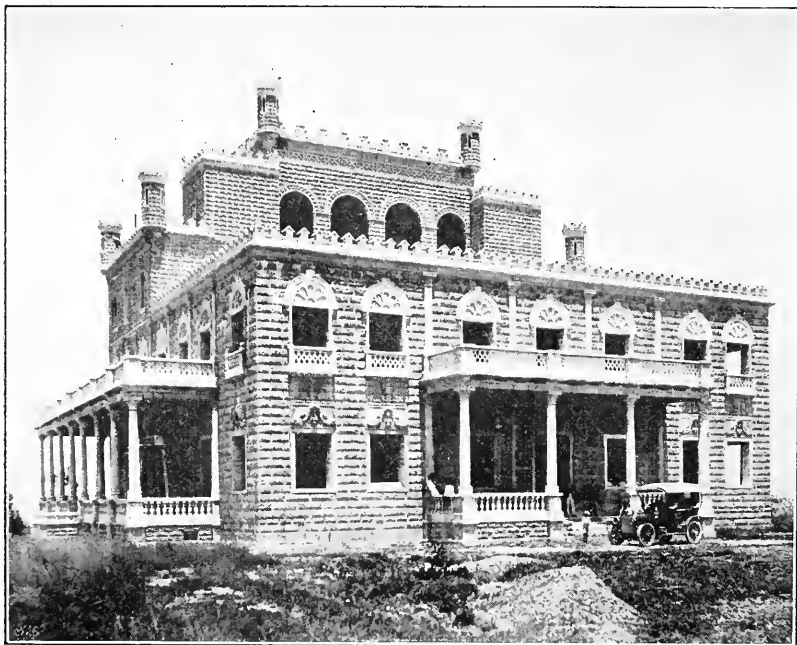
According to the official record of 1908, the country's population numbered 2,048,980, while on the registration lists the number of foreigners entitled to vote for President was given as 6,954, nearly two-thirds of whom are residents of Habana.

During the year a special commission was named to proceed to Europe for the purpose of making a study of immigration and, if possible, to devise means to divert the flow of Old World emigrants toward the Republic. To better facilitate this, the Department of the Treasury on April 9, 1908, issued a circular modifying the immigration laws.

General health conditions in Havana for 1908 showed a marked improvement, the number of deaths reported for 1907 being 6,708, as

compared with 5,994 in 1908. The public schools are systematically inspected as to sanitary condition, and over 6,000 persons were vaccinated as a preventive against smallpox. New regulations governing the practice of pharmacy are also being compiled.

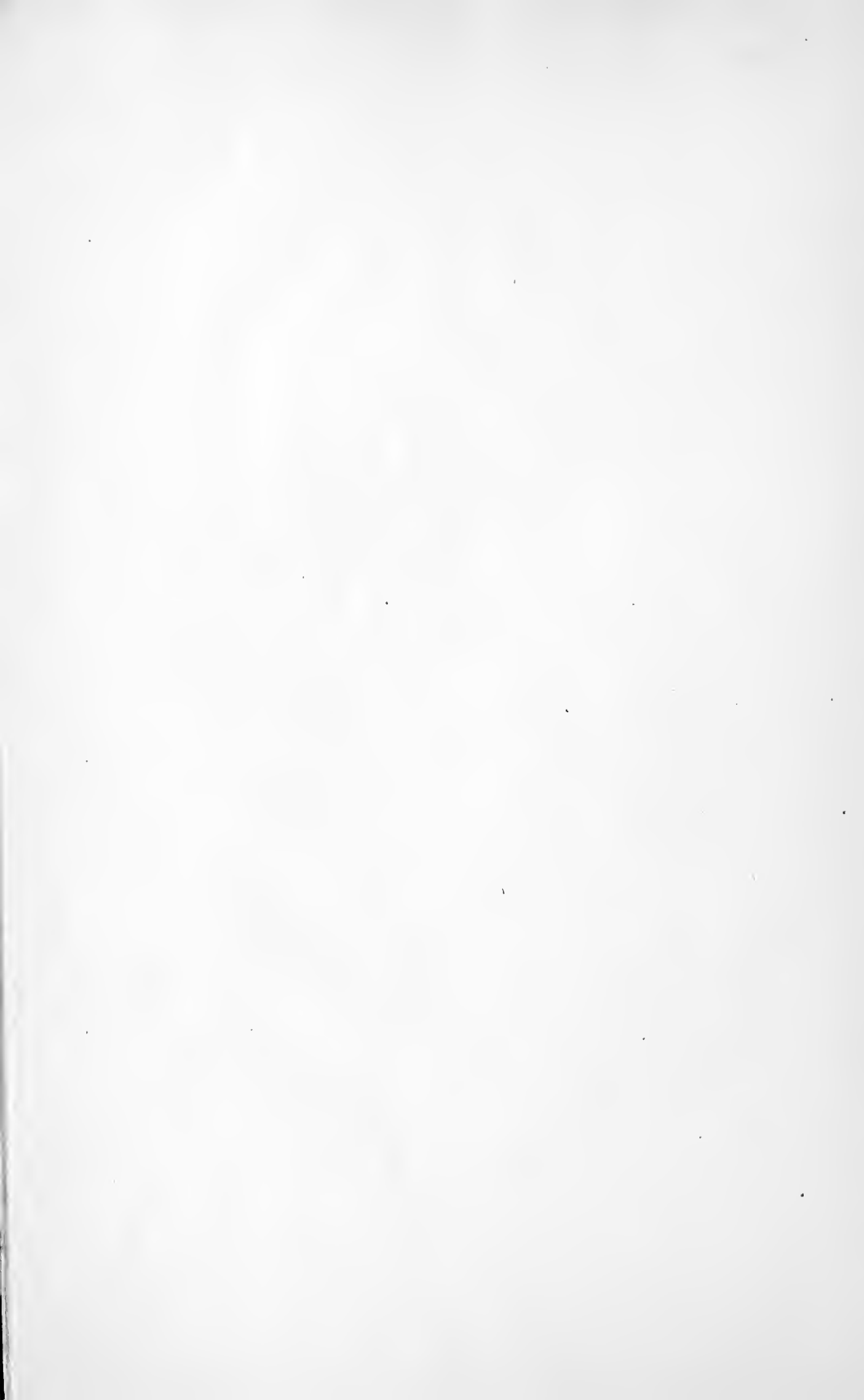
Many public works were contracted for, notably the system of waterworks at Cienfuegos, and a new wharf at Havana, while an appropriation of \$100,000 was made for the preliminary work in connection with the work of dredging the harbor of Sagua. It is estimated that the total cost of this work will reach \$2,000,000, the project including a 30-foot channel to allow the free entrance and exit of heavily laden vessels.



GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL.

The President of the Republic, in his message to the National Congress, delivered on April 21, 1909, proposed public improvements at an estimated cost of \$6,500,000. The items covered in the plan include a Presidential Palace, \$1,300,000; congressional building, \$1,400,000; a Palace of Justice, \$600,000; buildings for the Departments of State, Justice, Interior, Public Instruction, Public Works and Sanitation, at a cost of \$400,000 each; a provincial institute and school, \$300,000; a jail, \$300,000; and an appropriation of \$200,000 for the purpose of making the building at present devoted to the Department of Education available for the Department of Posts and Telegraphs.







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